

County Borough



of Blackpool.

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1916,

BY

E. W. REES JONES, M.D., D.P.H.,

*Medical Officer of Health and Medical Superintendent
to the Infectious Diseases Hospital.*



Preston :

PRINTED BY MATHER BROS., 31, LUNE STREET.
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ANNUAL HEALTH REPORT FOR 1916.

MR. COUNCILLOR HOLT, J.P., Mayor to November, 1916.

MR. COUNCILLOR PARKINSON, J.P., Mayor from November, 1916.

MR. ALDERMAN HAMPSON, J.P., Chairman of Health Committee.

MR. COUNCILLOR HARDMAN, Vice-Chairman of Health Committee.

Reference to the permanent features, such as the Geological Formation, Water Supply, Sewerage, &c., is omitted from this report, as are also various statistical tables. Only the more important vital statistics and the prominent items of sanitary administration, are reported upon, and the actual bulk of the report is not to be taken as an indication of the amount or importance of the work undertaken by the Health Department.

POPULATION.—The estimate of the Registrar-General is 68,602, which gives a density of population *i.e.*, persons per acre of 19.47.

INHABITED HOUSES.—The Borough Treasurer has supplied me with the figures obtained during the autumn enumeration, and I give them together with corresponding figures for previous years:—

	Empty.	Inhabited.	Total.
1916	77	15,963	16,040
1915	105	15,682	15,787
1914	130	15,096	15,226
1913	121	14,784	14,905

It will thus be seen that while the increase in the total number of houses is 253 over 1915, the number of empty houses is 28 less.

BIRTHS.—919 births were registered in 1916, including 18 in Kirkham Workhouse. The sexes were equally divided—460 males and 459 females. The birth-rate for the year was 13.40 per 1,000 of the population. This rate is the lowest ever yet recorded for the town, and is only 34.5 per cent. of the birth-rate for 1878. It compares with a rate of 21.6 per 1,000 for England and Wales generally, but the disparity in the constituent age and sex population of Blackpool and similar towns and the industrial centres has been referred to at length in my previous reports. The proportion of potential mothers, *i.e.*, married women under the age of 45 years is small in Blackpool. The number of illegitimate children born was 81, which gives an illegitimate birth-rate of 4.95 per 1,000 females of conceptive age. Having regard to the “war-baby” scare, the following comparison of the above figure with recent years is interesting:—

1916 ... 4.95	1914 ... 4.17	1912 ... 6.07
1915 ... 4.96	1913 ... 5.48	1911 ... 5.27

The sensational predictions on the subject of illegitimacy in its relationship to the war have been falsified

and no better test could have been applied than that of Blackpool, where, for three winters, so many soldiers have been living in billets.

DEATHS.—The number of Blackpool residents who died during the year was 877, 418 of whom were males and 459 females. The death-rate for the year was 13.91 per 1000 of the population. The percentages of the deaths in the various age groups, with similar figures for some previous years are as follows :—

	1916	1915	1914	1913	1912	1911
Under 12 months ...	9.1	12.1	11.6	14.3	11.29	15.2
1 and under 5 years..	4.8	5.1	5.6	6.6	4.0	6.2
5 ,, 65 ,, ...	47.2	46.9	51	47.9	49.8	49
65 years and over ...	38.9	35.8	32	31.2	34.9	29.6

It will thus be seen that the comparative percentage of infantile deaths was low, that of aged deaths was correspondingly higher.

The following are a few of the actual numbers of certified causes :—Syphilis 3, Cancer 93, Apoplexy 70, Heart Disease 70, Respiratory Diseases (excluding Phthisis) 170, Premature Birth 11, Infantile Debility 9, Old Age 62.

INFANT MORTALITY.—79 children died under the age of 12 months, and the Infant Mortality was at the rate of 86 per 1,000 births. This figure is highly satisfactory, and if maintained, will serve partially to counteract the low birth-rate. It is the lowest ever yet recorded for the town, though that for 1912 approaches it, *viz.*, 88. In no other year has the rate been below 100. Though only a small amount of

space is given to this subject in this report, its importance remains prominent. During the course of 1915 the Health Committee resolved to augment the work in the following directions: (1) The appointment of a second whole time Health Visitor; (2) The visitation of children up to the age of 5 years; and (3) The financial assistance where necessary for the provision of midwives or doctors at confinement. The attendances at the infant clinic at the Health Offices have so increased that it has been found necessary to hold the clinic on two afternoons (Mondays and Thursdays) instead of on one (Wednesdays) as formerly.

PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF OUT-RELIEF.—Mr. Dixon has supplied me with the following figures:—Males 135, Females 187, Children under 16, 245. Total 567.

Drs. Cockroft and Dunderdale have supplied me with the following figures for the Foxton Dispensary and Victoria Hospital respectively.

FOXTON DISPENSARY, 1916.					
Out-Patients	SURGICAL.		MEDICAL.		Total.
	Males.	Females.	Males.	Females.	
	22	29	95	240	386

VICTORIA HOSPITAL, 1916.			
	MEDICAL.	SURGICAL.	Total.
In-Patients ...	234	859	1093
Out-Patients	260	1086	1346
TOTAL	494	1945	2439

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—The following notifications, including those of military cases, were received during the year :—Variola 3, Diphtheria 42, Erysipelas 19, Scarlet Fever 144, Enteric Fever 6, Puerperal Fever 4, Measles 1,049, Pulmonary Tuberculosis 143, Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis 35, Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis 3, Infantile Paralysis 1, Ophthalmia Neonatorum 18.

The cases of Variola which were introduced into the town by an unvaccinated soldier were quickly and effectively stamped down. The cases of Diphtheria, though more numerous than in the two preceding years, were much on a level with those for other years. Scarlet Fever was somewhat low in incidence. The outstanding feature in our notifications of Infectious Diseases is that relating to Enteric Fever, only six cases being reported. This is the lowest figure for any previous year, the nearest being 12 in 1910. In addition to the above notifications, 218 cases of Chicken Pox, and 152 of Whooping Cough were brought to my notice, mainly by the School Attendance Officers.

Mr. Dixon informs me that 494 successful primary vaccinations were performed during the year, and exemption was granted to 287 conscientious objectors.

I have continued to act as temporary Tuberculosis Officer all through the year, and the work, which includes home visiting and attendance upon patients at the Sanatorium and Dispensary has made great demands upon my time.

No school closure was necessitated by Infectious Disease.

The following bacteriological work was carried out in the Laboratory at the Health Offices during the year :—

	Positive.	Negative.
Examination of swabs for Diphtheria Bacillus	76	368
„ sputum for tubercle Bacillus	104	284
„ urine for tubercle Bacillus...	—	2
TOTAL	834	

SANATORIUM.—The following table will indicate the work carried out at the institution during the year :

Disease.	Remain- ing in at end of 1915.	Admitt'd during 1916.	Disch'g d in 1916.	Died in 1916.	Remain- ing in at end of 1916.
Scarlet Fever	55	126	161	1	19
Diphtheria	—	48	37	3	8
Enteric Fever	4	4	6	—	2
Measles	—	117	116	1	—
Puerperal Fever ...	—	3	3	—	—
Erysipelas.....	—	4	3	1	—
Phthisis.....	9	58	49	10	8
Other Diseases ...	1	236	231	5	1
Total	69	596	606	21	38

With the exception of the year 1915, when 663 cases were admitted, the work during 1916 was the heaviest recorded. A very large amount of work was done for the military authorities, including the treat-

ment of 186 cases of Seabies as resident patients, and the bathing and disinfection of several hundred verminous cases. The total expenditure during the year on the Institution was £5,386.

GENERAL SANITARY WORK has been much on the lines of previous years, with the modifications necessitated by the depletion of staff. The following call for special comment :—

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.—In March, 1916, a clinic for infants and expectant mothers was opened at the Health Offices, and 116 first visits and 352 subsequent visits were paid. The Health Visitors have also paid 862 primary and 1,240 subsequent visits to mothers during the year.

MIDWIVES ACT.—There are 28 Midwives on the Register, and 88 visits were paid them by the Medical Officer of Health or Health Visitors.

PUBLIC ABATTOIRS.—The following animals were slaughtered :—

	1916		1915
Bulls	71	...	48
Cows	268	...	331
Heifers	2,358	...	2,405
Bullocks	1,565	...	1,320
Calves	232	...	645
Sheep	55,543	...	47,499
Pigs	679	...	716
	<hr/>	...	<hr/>
Total	60,716	...	52,964

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS ACTS.—Inspector Sanderson took 172 samples during the year, 14 of which were certified by the Public Analyst to be “not genuine.” These consisted of 2 of butter, 9 of milk, and 3 of sweet spirits of nitre.

The following visits have been paid :—

Houses fully inspected	235
Inspections of work in progress	2,251
„ basement dwellings.....	375
„ factories & workshops...	501
„ bakehouses	225
„ common lodging houses	808
„ manure heaps	1,471
„ sands	99
Visits <i>re</i> Infectious Disease	2,153
„ „ Deaths	849
„ „ Births	2,129
„ by District Nurses	5,173
Inspections of Billets	1,715
New houses examined	149
Visits <i>re</i> ash receptacles	1,663

METEOROLOGY.—1916 was a dry but dull year with the mean temperature 0.7 degree above the average. Bright sunshine amounted to 1,334 hours, or 257 hours below the average, and is the lowest recorded since 1912. The total rainfall for the year was 28.7 inches or 4.25 inches below the average. Rain fell on 207 days, and the greatest fall in one day was 0.80 inch on the 3rd of September. It is the smallest rainfall recorded since 1905. Gales occurred on 52 days. In gusts the maximum velocity was 65 miles per hour on the 1st January. Snow fell on 7 days, but the falls were only slight in amount. Hail

fell on 10 days, and fogs were experienced on 19 days. The maximum shade temperature was 76 degrees on the 19th May, and the minimum temperature on the grass was 11 degrees on the 23rd March. Thunderstorms occurred on 7 days.

E. W. REES JONES,
Medical Officer of Health,
Blackpool.

30th May, 1917.



